

NEW RIVER TRAIL STATE PARK
MASTER PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JUNE 2, 2003
MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM at the Jackson Elementary School in Austinville.

Advisory Committee members present were: Richard White, Jim Bobbitt, Tommy Duncan, Roy Hackler, Jack Roberts, Mary Lilly Nucholls, Susie Dixon Garner, Raymond Kohl, Charles Stewart, and Jim Alley. Mark Hufeisen, Eric Hougland, Duane Campbell, and James Elliott represented park staff. Robert Munson and Scott Bedwell facilitated the meeting.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as distributed.

A copy of the executive summary and findings of the 2001 State Park Users Survey was distributed and discussed. It was noted that the results of the survey tracked well with assumptions the committee had made in assessing current conditions and future needs in the park in our previous meeting.

The remainder of the meeting was spent developing a park purpose statement, goals, and objectives for the master plan and the park (Enclosure I).

The next meeting was scheduled for July 14, 2003, beginning at 6:30 PM at the Jackson Elementary School. The purpose of the meeting will be to review the current condition of each management node in the park and to determine whether improvements need to be made and what they should be.

A public input meeting is scheduled for July 21, 2003 in the Grayson Hall Commons at the Wytheville Community College in Wytheville from 6:30 to 9:30 PM. The purpose of that meeting will be to ascertain the public's perception of the desired future condition of the park, to solicit ideas, and to identify issues, opportunities and constraints. The draft goals and objectives developed at the June 2nd meeting will be presented for comment.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

DRAFT NEW RIVER TRAIL STATE PARK GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Constitution of Virginia, Article XI-Section 1

“To the end that the people have clean air, pure water, and the use and enjoyment for recreation of adequate public lands, waters, and other natural resources, it shall be the policy of the Commonwealth to conserve, develop, and utilize its natural resources, its public lands, and historic sites and buildings. Further, it shall be the Commonwealth’s policy to protect its atmosphere, lands, and waters from pollution, impairment, or destruction, for the benefit, enjoyment, and general welfare of the people of the Commonwealth.”

B. Department of Conservation and Recreation Mission Statement

“The mission of the Department of Conservation and Recreation is to conserve, protect, and enhance the Commonwealth’s unique natural, recreational, scenic, historic and cultural resources”. Within this broad mission, the Department manages a system of strategically located properties totaling approximately 80,000 acres.

C. Virginia State Park Mission Statement

“To conserve the natural, scenic, historic and cultural resources of the Commonwealth and provide recreational and educational opportunities consistent with the good stewardship of these lands, waters and facilities that leaves them unimpaired for future generations.”

D. New River Trail State Park Purpose Statement

The purpose of New River Trail State Park is to provide a premiere non-motorized trail for pedestrians, bicyclists, and horseback riders; to facilitate access to the adjacent New River; to provide a range of supporting land and water based outdoor recreational and educational facilities and programs; and to protect and interpret the scenic, natural, historical, and cultural resources of the New River Valley of Virginia.

Goal 1.0 – Protect and conserve the natural, scenic, historic and cultural resources of the Park.

Objective 1.1 – Manage the park for the benefit of native species and natural communities.

Objective 1.2 – Implement the adopted Park Resource Management Plan.

Objective 1.3 – Protect the natural and pastoral setting of the park through an array of land conservation strategies in cooperation with local governments, conservation organizations, and local landowners.

Objective 1.4 – Stabilize and where possible restore the historic structures in the park.

Objective 1.5 – Design, construct and locate new facilities to compliment the natural or historic setting of the park.

Goal 2.0 – Provide recreational opportunities for day-use visitors to the park.

Objective 2.1 –Provide a range of high quality concession services in the park that facilitate use of the park’s many opportunities by all visitors.

Objective 2.2 – Encourage the establishment of private businesses in the vicinity of the park that offer a wide range of quality services to enhance the experience of visitors to the Park and the region.

Objective 2.2 –Enhance the connection of the New River Trail with the trails on the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area.

Objective 2.3 –Participate in trail linkages with local communities and other nearby facilities.

Objective 2.4 –Cooperate with the Town of Pulaski to extend New River Trail to the train station in Pulaski.

Objective 2.5 – Cooperate with local governments and the National Park Service to extend the southern terminus of the Trail to the Mountain Music Festival Park at Fishers Peak on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Objective 2.6 – Participate in the development and management of the New River Canoe Trail in Virginia.

Objective 2.7 –Provide additional and enhanced water access to the New River for recreation and education including support facilities for river users.

Objective 2.8 –Develop a picnic area at Foster Falls development area to include three shelters, restroom facilities, roads, and parking.

Objective 2.9 –Develop a picnic facility and day-use parking at Horseshoe Bend development area.

Objective 2.10- Connect the Dannelly Sports Complex with the New River Trail by bridging Chestnut Creek.

Objective 2.11 – Develop concession operations at Draper, Austinville, New River Recreation Area, and Horseshoe Bend development areas.

Objective 2.12 – Expand the concession building at Foster Falls to meet enhanced demand.

Goal 3.0 – Provide enhanced facilities for overnight visitors to the park.

Objective 3.1 – Construct a new campground at the Horseshoe Bend, New River Recreation Area, Austinville, and Galax development areas.

Objective 3.2 – Convert acquired cabins and houses to rental cabins.

Objective 3.3 – Construct up to 10 two and three bedroom cabins at the Galax Conservation Education Center.

Objective 3.4 – Develop a bathhouse for the Foster Falls Campground.

Objective 3.5 – Develop equestrian campgrounds at Jackson’s Ferry Meadow, New River Recreation Area, and at Horseshoe Bend development area.

Objective 3.6 – Restore the Foster Falls Hotel.

Objective 3.7 – Acquire suitable buildings in the Foster Falls Village as additional accommodations for park visitors.

Objective 3.8 – Develop canoe-in campgrounds at Hiwassee Island, Double Shoals, Hanes Island, and Austinville.

Objective 3.9 – Develop a horse show ring and supporting facilities at the Horseshoe Bend development area.

Objective 3.10 – Acquire management responsibility for the New River Recreation Area and complete development of the campground.

Objective 3.11 – Acquire properties suitable for park educational, interpretive, and management programs when made available by willing sellers.

Goal 4.0 – To provide the focal point for interpretation, environmental education, and public information dissemination relating to conservation of significant scenic, natural, historic, cultural, archaeological, and geological resources of the New River Valley region.

Objective 4.1 – Restore the Foster Falls Village as a turn of the century industrial village. Interpret the iron furnace, the railroad, the saw/grist mill, and develop a range of living history displays in the various restored village structures to demonstrate blacksmithing, coopering, carpentry, weaving, spinning, milling, and other trades prevalent in the early history of the New River Valley.

Objective 4.2 – Provide a full time park interpreter to guide interpretive and education programs in the Park and on the New River.

Objective 4.3 – Develop displays, brochures and interpretive programs that tell the story of the New River Valley—its geology, flora, fauna, Native American history, its settlement history, transportation, and the events of note to the history of the region.

Objective 4.4 - Increase self-guided interpretive programs through increased signage and brochures.

Objective 4.5 – Develop a conservation education center at the Galax development node.

Objective 4.6 – Convert the residence at Byllesby Hydro to an environmental education center.

Goal 5.0 – Participate in mutually beneficial efforts with local governments, local businesses, and partner organizations to enhance the entire region.

Objective 5.1 – Work cooperatively with local jurisdictions, conservation organizations, land trusts, and landowners along the New River to ensure conservation of the scenic, natural and cultural resources of the valley.

Objective 5.2 – Actively partner with local tourism agencies, chambers of commerce, and other providers of outdoor recreation activities in the New River Valley, to promote the area, and to provide information to the visiting public.

Objective 5.3 – Partner with private businesses and public agencies to ensure that recreational and hospitality offerings and educational opportunities provided to park visitors meet the highest standards.

Objective 5.4 – Foster community support and volunteerism in the park.

Objective 5.5 – Participate in local and regional planning efforts to foster sustainable land use and development that protects the water quality and scenic beauty of the New River, the State Park, and the region.

Goal 6.0 – Administer and manage the park in a manner that fosters the public’s trust.

Objective 6.1 – Provide adequate vehicles, tools, and equipment to support management, operations and maintenance of the park.

Objective 6.2 – Provide appropriate staff levels with necessary skills and certifications to achieve the park’s goals and objectives.

Objective 6.3 – Provide services and facilities that meet public expectations for security, safety and health.

Objective 6.4 – Assure proper care and maintenance of park facilities and infrastructure.

Objective 6.5 – Construct a staff residence at the Horseshoe Bend management area.

Objective 6.6 – Construct park administrative offices at Horseshoe Bend, Foster Falls, and Galax.

Objective 6.7 – Construct Park maintenance areas at Horseshoe Bend, Foster Falls, and Galax.

Objective 6.8 – Renovate the Shot Tower and associated facilities.

Objective 6.9 – Conduct periodic engineering analyses of all trail bridges and structures to ensure their safe condition for public use.

Objective 6.10 – Provide safe drinking water systems for all major park public use areas.

Objective 6.11 – Provide sanitary facilities at reasonable intervals along the Trail and the New River.

Objective 6.12 – Provide emergency call boxes at appropriate spacing that are accessible to visitors from the Trail and the River.

